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Saint Helena

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 21 December 2012. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administrative Power: Governor Mark Capes (October 2011).

Geography: Saint Helena is a small island of volcanic origin situated in the South Atlantic Ocean, approximately 1,900 km from Angola and 2,900 km from Brazil. Ascension lies 1,200 km to the north-west of Saint Helena, and Tristan da Cunha and the other small islands lie approximately 2,400 km to the south of Saint Helena.

Land area: 310 km^2, consisting of the islands of Saint Helena and Ascension and the Tristan da Cunha group.

Exclusive economic zone: 1,641,294 km^2.[a]

Population: Saint Helena: 4,214; Ascension: 917; Tristan da Cunha: 265 (November 2012 estimates).

Language: English.

Capital: Jamestown.

Main political parties: None.

Elections: Most recent: November 2009; next: November 2013.

Legislature: Unicameral legislative assembly (15 seats, 12 elected members).

Gross domestic product per capita: $2,291 (2000/01 estimate).

Economy: Fishing, coffee, tourism, sales of postage stamps. The economy depends on financial assistance from the United Kingdom.

Unemployment rate: 12.7 per cent (2001/02 estimate).

Monetary unit: Saint Helena pound (SHP).

Brief history: The island of Saint Helena was reportedly discovered in 1502 by a Spanish navigator in the service of Portugal and by the end of the sixteenth century had become a port of call for ships en route from Europe to the East Indies. In 1633, it was formally annexed by the Netherlands; however, in 1659 the British East India Company took possession of the island.

[a] Exclusive economic zone data from the "Sea around us" project, a collaboration between the University of British Columbia and the Pew Environment Group (www.seaaroundus.org).

I. Constitutional, legal and political developments

1. The current Constitution of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha entered into force in September 2009. The new Constitution changed the name of the Territory from "Saint Helena and its Dependencies" to "Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha", giving the three islands equal status within the Territory. The Head of the Government of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha is the Governor, appointed by the British Crown. However, the ability of the Governor to act inconsistently with the wishes of elected Councillors is curtailed in comparison with the previous Constitution. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 provides for the granting of British citizenship to "British overseas territory citizens".

2. The Constitution provides for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, including protection of the right to life and to personal liberty, protection from inhumane treatment and from slavery and forced labour and the protection of prisoners, the right to marry, children's rights, freedom of conscience, the right to education and freedom of expression, assembly and association.

3. The Legislative Council comprises the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, three ex officio members (the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Attorney General) and 12 elected members. The Executive Council, which is presided over by the Governor, consists of the ex officio members and five elected members from the Legislative Council. The ex officio members have no vote in either body.

4. Elections are held by secret ballot, at intervals of not more than four years, by universal suffrage for those aged 18 years and over. The most recent general elections were held on 4 November 2009. Twelve nominees (six for each constituency) were duly elected. The Legislative Council met formally on 13 November and elected the five elected members of the Executive Council and Chairs for each of the eight Council Committees. An election for a new Executive Council was held on 7 November 2011, at the midpoint of the terms of office of the current Legislative Council. The Council is due for dissolution on or before November 2013, and the next general election will be held shortly thereafter.

5. The 2009 Constitution contains enhanced provisions for ensuring the independence of the judiciary from the legislative and executive organs of the Government. The judicial system comprises a Court of Appeal, a Supreme Court and such subordinate courts (currently a Magistrates' Court and provisions for coroner's enquiries into sudden deaths) as may be established by ordinance. There remains a final appeal to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in prescribed circumstances.

6. In January 2013, following a resolution passed in September 2012 by the Legislative Council, a public consultation process on proposals to adjust the 2009 Constitution was launched. According to the consultation document presented by Governor Capes, the proposed changes would create an environment that promotes the further development of democratic and good governance. Specific proposals relate to three areas: the Executive Council, the Council Committees and the Public Account Committee. According to the same document, the proposals originated from the widely held belief that the Constitution created a political system that was not conducive to collective leadership and responsibility, clear lines of authority or transparent accountability. Governor Capes noted that the proposed changes did not

give the Governor or the Councillors additional powers. Eight public meetings were held during the consultation period, which ended on 25 January 2013.

II. Budget

7. Owing to a shrinking tax base due in part to migration and an ageing population, Saint Helena depends heavily on the United Kingdom and other external sources for funding. Budgetary support from the United Kingdom is used to provide essential public services and to subsidize the dedicated shipping service of the Territory. According to the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, Saint Helena is not allowed to borrow funds, in accordance with guidelines from Her Majesty's Treasury. As a consequence, grants from the Department and the European Union are the only resources available.

8. According to information provided by the administering Power, total budgetary aid, development assistance and shipping support from the Government of the United Kingdom amount to £24.378 million for the 2012/13 fiscal year, compared to £21.485 million during the previous period, representing a 13.5 per cent increase. The 2012/13 aid package was approved in February 2012, following a visit to Saint Helena by representatives of the Department for International Development. It was decided during that visit that the next three-year budget review would take place in January 2013.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

9. The economy of Saint Helena depends largely on financial assistance from the United Kingdom. Approximately 40 per cent of the labour force works in the Government; the next-largest sector for employment is retail and services. The local population also earns income from fishing, raising livestock and selling handicrafts. In June 2011, the Government of Saint Helena conducted a national workforce survey to assess the likely demand for labour during the construction and operation of an airport, as well as to provide an indication of gaps in skills and future training needs. Moreover, the labour market strategy for the period 2013-2014, setting up the policy framework, was presented by the Government along with an implementation plan to ensure the achievement of strategic goals throughout 2014. A midterm review of the strategy will be conducted by the Government in 2013.

10. According to the United Kingdom, a three-year modernization programme has just been completed. A no-cost extension to the project's time e was agreed by the Department for International Development, which moved the final date of project completion to the end of November 2012. The programme focused on supporting the implementation of the air access memorandum of the "Understanding reform" programme. The previous year's work stream included supporting corporate governance, rationalizing/streamlining Government, divestment, establishing quality standards and adopting a medium-term expenditure framework.

B. Development

11. Saint Helena is eligible to receive funds from the European Union. The Territory's allocation from the tenth European Development Fund (2008-2013) is €16.63 million. On Saint Helena, the Fund's allocation will allow for the development of a safer landing facility (including a breakwater, a slipway and a sheltered landing area), improved sea defences in James Bay and road rehabilitation. On Ascension Island, the allocation will be applied to road upgrading. On Tristan da Cunha, it will be used for further harbour improvements, the investigation of alternative energy potential, water upgrading, waste management, electricity distribution infrastructure and capacity-building related to the management of the lobster processing plant.

12. Development aid from the Department for International Development is provided within a three-year framework. In addition, the Department has funded a major infrastructure review that has led to the development of a comprehensive plan that identifies the infrastructure requirements of Saint Helena over the next 10 to 20 years.

13. In March 2008, a disaster management capability review, fully funded by the Department for International Development, was undertaken in Saint Helena by the Government of the United Kingdom. In February 2009, a disaster management consultant funded by the European Union visited Saint Helena to consolidate the work of the island Disaster Management Committee. Further recommendations are now being carried forward. The disaster management recommendations are being implemented in quarterly meetings led by the Chief of Police in his capacity as the Disaster Management Coordinator for Saint Helena. According to the United Kingdom, a successful live waterborne disaster management exercise took place in 2012, from which valuable lessons were learned. A joint agency disaster-management live exercise was conducted in January 2013, following the previous exercise in November 2010.

C. Fisheries and agriculture

14. Fisheries are an important sector of the economy of Saint Helena. According to the United Kingdom, there are 29 fishing boats with commercial licences, but only about 12 of them fish regularly. The local fishermen sell their catch to the Saint Helena Fisheries Corporation. Fish purchases for the first half of the financial year 2012/13 were 131.82 tons, compared to 380.43 tons during the same period the previous year. Fish exports from April to August 2012 amounted to 76.6 tons, compared to 491.1 tons over the same period the previous year. There was no take-up of foreign fishing licences in 2012, although the opportunity to do so still exists. All foreign fishing vessels taking up licences to fish are required to have on board a vessel monitoring system as part of the conditions of licence. The island's wild fish were the first to receive organic certification from the Soil Association, the leading campaigning and certification organization of the United Kingdom for organic food and farming.

15. Saint Helena has developed a reputation for the high quality of its coffee. The island's product is considered one of the finest premium coffees in the world. Owing

to problems in the coffee sector, however, only 1,582 kg of Arabica Green Tipped Bourbon beans were exported in 2012.

16. With regard to farming, according to the administering Power, during the fiscal year 2012/13 the focus has been on covered production. An area of 2,340 ft^2 has been established, and there are plans for a further 7,800 ft^2. Planning permission is also being obtained for a further 4,680 ft^2. The aim of using covered production is to control the growing environment in order to optimize the production of salad crops.

D. Transport and utilities

17. Access to Saint Helena is provided by the *RMS Saint Helena*, which serves Saint Helena, Ascension and Cape Town, South Africa, but it is already 22 years old and increasingly expensive to operate. The only port, Jamestown, provides good anchorage, although it lacks safe landing facilities that would allow passengers of large cruise vessels to come ashore in all types of weather. It is hoped that the construction of a jetty in Rupert's Bay, combined with air access development, will enable the separation of cargo and passenger operations in the future.

18. According to the United Kingdom, Prosperous Bay Plain, on the east of the island, has been selected for the airport development, which includes a runway, an apron area, a terminal building and supporting airside and landside facilities. An access road connecting the airport site to the facilities in Rupert's Bay (the temporary jetty and bulk fuel installation) and inshore sea rescue are also requirements under the airport project. The contractual completion date of the project is February 2016. The opportunities enabled by air access should eventually make the island financially independent and not reliant on funding from the United Kingdom and the European Union.

19. The Territory has approximately 168 km of paved roads (Saint Helena, 118 km; Ascension, 40 km; Tristan da Cunha, 10 km) and 30 km of unpaved roads (Saint Helena, 20 km; and Tristan da Cunha, 10 km).

20. Saint Helena has two local radio stations, as well as satellite television stations rebroadcast terrestrially. Ascension has one local radio station and receives relays of broadcasts from Saint Helena. Broadcasts from the British Forces Broadcasting Service are available, as well as television services for the United States military. Tristan da Cunha has one local radio station and receives television and radio broadcasts from the British Forces Broadcasting Service. There were 936 Internet subscribers in Saint Helena as at 1 December 2012.

21. Under the electricity distribution project funded by the Department for International Development, work has been under way to upgrade and extend the island's electricity distribution system. A further project to refurbish the power station and the generators and the installation of additional wind turbines are under way. The water collection, treatment and distribution network is currently under review, and funding from the Department is available to ensure that any high-priority works can be implemented. Further joint funding by the Department and the European Union is available to refurbish some of the major roads across Saint Helena. Following the approval of a solid waste management strategy in 2012, improved waste management practices should be in place by December 2013 to allow the landfill disposal site to operate in close proximity to the airport.

E. Banking and credit

22. In December 2008, new ordinances on financial services and money-laundering came into force. The bills are aimed at ensuring that Saint Helena complies with international obligations while safeguarding Saint Helenians from fraudulent financial service providers.

F. Tourism

23. In 2010, the Department for International Development approved £1.2 million for the tourism development project on Saint Helena. The project provides, among other things, for enhanced marketing and promotion, improved destination management and community-driven projects linked with tourism.

24. The United Kingdom believes that the new airport is the best way to bring new financial opportunities to the island and promote tourism. At present, about 2,000 visitors make the trip to Saint Helena by ship each year. With the airport, it is estimated that more than 29,000 tourists will visit the island each year. The rugged natural beauty of the Territory, its rare wildlife and its historic sites, such as Napoleon's tomb, are expected to attract visitors. With the completion of the airport, tourist expenditure on the island may grow from £707,000 in 2009/10 to £9,840,000 in 2021 and stimulate growth in the wider economy.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

25. According to the 2008 Saint Helena census, the population stood at 4,077. Approximately 17 per cent of the resident Saint Helenian population resides in the capital, Jamestown. Following the reintroduction of the granting of British citizenship to Saint Helenians in 2002, the islands experienced an exodus. The impact of outward labour migration is evident in the age-sex characteristics of the resident Saint Helenian population. The resident population is skewed towards the elderly, and there is a prominent deficit in the population within the 20-40 age bracket and an associated reduction in the number of young children. Approximately one third of households are headed by women. Of those, approximately 40 per cent are single and less than 20 per cent are married. However, the 2008 census did not provide an update on the number of children with one or more parents living abroad, but previous figures suggest this to be about 25 per cent. The initiation of the air access project has seen a reversal of the trend, and an increasing number of Saint Helenians are returning to the island to take advantage of improved employment and business development opportunities.

26. Measured by international standards, Saint Helena is a middle-income Territory with few signs of real material poverty. This is largely the result of the all-encompassing Government safety net, which guarantees everyone a minimum standard of living, and of social networks that encourage the distribution of income among kin, most notably in the form of remittances. However, according to the Department for International Development, the lack of socioeconomic data remains an acute challenge in understanding poverty, inequality and socioeconomic trends,

constraining the development of evidence-based policymaking. A new national strategy for the development of statistics was endorsed by the Economy and Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on 8 March 2012. The strategy provides a framework to underpin the enhancement of the Territory's current statistical system through the establishment and implementation of a cohesive action plan covering the next three years.

27. According to media reports, Saint Helena achieved two top-10 rankings — eighth in both best quality of life and best direct foreign investment strategy — in the African Countries of the Future 2011/12 ranking made by fDi Intelligence.

28. The ageing population of the Territory, with 22 per cent over 65 years of age, has created an increasing need for substantial investment in a new elderly care programme. To that end, the Princess Royal Community Care Centre, funded by the Department for International Development, was opened in 2008. A revised policy for home-care support aimed at providing support with daily activities to enable older people to live in their own homes for as long as possible took effect in mid-November 2010. According to the United Kingdom, in April 2011 a new social security ordinance providing for the payment of income-related benefits to the poorest households on the island came into force. The legislation also provides for the introduction of a benefit called the "basic island pension", which is available to people aged 65 and older who are able to demonstrate that they worked a minimum of 20 years on Saint Helena. At the end of November 2011, 550 persons were receiving a basic island pension.

29. The Welfare of Children Ordinance came into force in March 2010. The legislation changes the strategic management structure for safeguarding children and young people on Saint Helena. Policies and procedures have been developed for child protection and safeguarding the welfare of children. The legislation fulfils the Territory's obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

30. According to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office report entitled *Human Rights and Democracy*, issued in 2012, the protection and promotion of human rights in each territory is primarily the responsibility of the territorial Government, while the Government of the United Kingdom is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the territories fulfil their obligations arising from international human rights treaties that have been extended to them.

31. There is one general hospital in Jamestown, as well as three health clinics serving people living in rural areas. In addition, two units cater to clients with challenging behaviour problems and learning disabilities.

32. In a communiqué dated 5 December 2012, the Joint Ministerial Council, a body bringing together the political leaders and representatives of the United Kingdom and its overseas territories, including Saint Helena, expressed agreement on the importance of health security and on achieving compliance with the requirements of the International Health Regulations, an international legal instrument binding on 194 countries, including all States members of the World Health Organization, by June 2014. Furthermore, the participants agreed to identify and make use of all available sources of assistance, in particular regional and global health organizations such as the Pan American Health Organization and United Nations agencies, to share best practices on health strategies and processes, with

special emphasis on the treatment of non-communicable diseases, and to improve representation of the territories and linkages with global and regional health bodies.[1]

B. Employment

33. The public sector employs about 40 per cent of the workforce. The Government of Saint Helena has been looking at standards of practice in employment in anticipation of the economic changes that are expected because of the construction of the airport. Legislation was passed in 2010 with provisions relating to employment and the rights of employees in order to create a framework for the enforcement of such rights. Those rights relate to a written statement of particulars, provision for working time regulations, protection from unfair dismissal, entitlement to unpaid parental leave and unpaid leave to care for dependants and provision for a minimum wage. In addition, the Government has indicated that it intends to enact new legislation to regulate the terms and conditions under which people are employed by businesses and other organizations in Saint Helena. The subjects expected to be covered include paid holiday and rest breaks, limits on night work, maternity and paternity pay, redundancy pay and protection from unauthorized deductions from pay, as well as the right to belong or not to belong to a trade union or staff association.

34. With a view to correcting anomalies and addressing staff retention, as well as encouraging and/or facilitating career management, in April 2010 the Government introduced a revised system of fairer pay scales.

35. Offshore employment has steadily increased and, with it, remittances to the Territory. Approximately one quarter of the island's workforce is employed on Ascension, in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) or in the United Kingdom. The Finance Directorate no longer processes remittances, as they are done through the Bank of Saint Helena.

36. The majority of contracts for offshore employment are for unaccompanied workers, resulting in a significant social burden and the dislocation of families. In addition, the loss of trained staff to better-paid offshore employment makes it necessary to bring in a range of internationally recruited staff in a number of sectors. As a result of the construction of an airport, which started in late 2011, the demand for workers has increased significantly. According to the Department for International Development, in the present situation of nearly full employment, the lack of additional labour force capacity constrains private sector growth. At the same time, evidence of underemployment suggests the potential for economic growth as a result of productivity gains.

[1] The communiqué is available from https://fco-stage.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/uk-ot-communique.pdf.

C. Education

37. Education is compulsory and free for children between 5 and 16 years of age. There are currently four schools in operation, comprising three all-through primary schools (for pupils aged 3 to 11 years) and one secondary school (for students aged 11 to 18 years). Students over 16 may opt for United Kingdom-accredited academic or vocational courses. Since September 2009, distance learning opportunities have been included in the curriculum of the secondary school. The Directorate of Education is also responsible for the training and retraining of the public and private sectors, through its Adult and Vocational Education Service.

38. Retaining qualified, experienced staff continues to be a challenge. The Education Ordinance 2008 improved the legal framework for providing suitable education to children and raised the compulsory schooling age from 15 to 16 years. The allowance scheme available to students in years 12 and 13 for attending school has been selected as the first untargeted subsidy to be reformed. Beginning in September 2011, the reform changed the school allowance from an untargeted to a targeted subsidy so that students who come from a household that meets the criteria will still benefit. The Executive Council decided that only those students in years 12 and 13 from a household with a gross annual income of up to £11,000 will qualify for the school allowance. For the year 2012/13, the Government's estimated expenditure on education and employment is £2,196,424, including all of the primary sectors and tertiary education and teacher training costs.

D. Environment

39. Saint Helena has an environmental conservation programme aimed at preserving endangered species and the diversity of habitats. The Government actively pursues compliance with its commitments under the Environment Charter, but resource constraints have impeded progress in some areas.

40. The Overseas Territories Environment Programme, funded jointly by the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the Government of the United Kingdom, approved several projects for the Territory in 2011, including three projects for Saint Helena, two for Ascension Island and two for Tristan da Cunha. No project bids were called for in 2012.

41. In January 2012, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom issued a paper entitled "The environment in the United Kingdom's overseas territories: UK Government and civil society support", on the advice and support available to the territories in its areas of competence, and highlighted the availability of departmental funds for that purpose.

V. Ascension

A. Constitutional and political status

42. The 2009 Constitution of the Territory removed the notion that Ascension was a "dependency" of Saint Helena, but the islands remain part of a single territory, sharing a Governor, Attorney General and superior courts. The new Constitution

enshrines the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms and contains enhanced provisions to guarantee the independence of the judiciary from the legislative and executive organs of the Government.

43. For the first time, the existence of an Island Council is recognized in the Constitution, with detailed provisions to be made by local ordinance. A new Council was elected in February 2011.

44. In June 2010, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf denied a claim for a continental shelf area beyond 200 nautical miles submitted by the United Kingdom to the Commission, in respect of Ascension Island, in accordance with the provision set out in article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Commission concluded that the volcanic pinnacle on which Ascension rests was too slender to generate rights to an extended zone of the submerged continental shelf.

B. Economic and social conditions

45. Following a joint meeting between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Ministry of Defence team and the Ascension Island Council regarding the right of abode and property ownership on Ascension, in January 2006 the Government of the United Kingdom announced that there would be no change in its policy and that rights of permanent abode and property ownership would not be granted on Ascension. The issue for the Government of the United Kingdom was one of contingent liabilities that could fall on British taxpayers. Legislation underpinning a land and business policy was enacted in June 2008. It was aimed at providing a clear and transparent means of determining the allocation and use of land, as well as a framework for the operation of businesses on the island.

VI. Tristan da Cunha

A. Constitutional and political status

46. Executive authority for Tristan da Cunha is exercised by the Governor of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. A resident Administrator is appointed by and reports to the Governor. The Administrator is advised by an Island Council, comprising the Administrator, who is President of the Council, eight elected members (including a Chief Islander and at least one woman) and three appointed members. Elections are held every three years. All registered voters over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Under the 2009 Constitution, the Governor continues to have legislative authority over Tristan da Cunha but, for the first time, is constitutionally required to consult the Island Council before making any laws.

47. Tristan da Cunha has its own legislation, but Saint Helena law applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, insofar as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstances make necessary. As a last resort, the laws of England and Wales apply. There are two special constables and one full-time police officer. The Administrator also serves as the Magistrate.

B. Economic and social conditions

48. The economy of Tristan da Cunha is based on traditional subsistence farming and fishing. Rock lobster is sustainably fished and exported to Australia, Japan and the United States of America. Work is in progress to gain access to the European Union market. Tourism from occasional passing cruise ships and the sale of commemorative coins and stamps also bring the island significant income. Government income from those sectors is used to fund health, education and other Government services. In 2009/10 the Government of the United Kingdom funded the construction of a post office/museum and a police station on the island. The post office/museum hosts a number of tourism services, which generate additional income for the island.

49. A new lobster plant was completed in July 2009, redressing the hardship caused by the burning of the plant the previous year. A new crane arrived on the island in 2011, making repairs to the harbour wall possible.

50. Access to Tristan da Cunha is only by sea and is provided primarily by two vessels operated by the South African company Ovenstone, which holds the fishing concession for Tristan da Cunha lobster, and by the *SA Agulhas II*, a research vessel that services a South African weather station on Gough Island once a year. Between them, they visit Tristan da Cunha nine times a year, operating a passenger and freight service. The journey between Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha takes about seven days.

51. The harbour can be used only when weather and sea conditions are favourable, and cruise ships are often unable to land passengers. The harbour is not deep enough for visiting ships and is vulnerable to sea storms. Further repairs funded by the Government of the United Kingdom were carried out between January and April 2011 and again between January and April 2012. Repairs are needed every year, following winter storms. Longer-term options to reinforce or redesign the harbour are being considered.

52. Following the installation of an improved telephone network early in 2007, Tristan da Cunha enjoys improved telecommunications. The United Kingdom funds the line rental charge for the service. Telephone services are reliable and available to all households. Further improvements to the island's telecommunications were made in 2011 and 2012. Internet access is now available to the community through an Internet cafe and a Wi-Fi system.

53. Until 2008, the island's expenditure has been substantially higher than its earnings, leading to a serious drain on reserves. Contributing factors include inexperience in financial management, the amount of capital expenditure needed to maintain such a remote and isolated community and the cost of medical services, including offshore medical treatment for islanders.

54. In 2009, the Island Council set out broad strategies to secure the island's financial future. According to the United Kingdom, even with such reforms, the island would very soon become insolvent, unless further drastic measures continued to be taken. In 2011, a thorough review of budgets was undertaken and strict rules on procurement and expenditure were introduced. Increased income from a new fishing licence agreement negotiated in 2009/10 and improved sales in other income streams have also helped. As a result, the island forecasted a surplus of revenue over

expenditure in both 2011 and 2012. According to the administering Power, external financial assistance with infrastructure projects continues to be needed. Funds from the European Union (through the tenth European Development Fund) came on stream in 2011. Projects include upgrades to the electrical reticulation system, the improvement of the quality of the water supply, an improved waste management system, further harbour repairs and a pilot project for renewable energy.

55. The Department for International Development funds the position of a resident doctor. In order to build capacity on the island, it also funds the positions of a nurse trainer, the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Public Works. The Department also sponsors annual dental and biennial optometrist visits. It has been a number of years since Tristanians had access to off-island training, but in 2012 an agreement that would facilitate on- and off-island training was reached with the Department.

56. Pupils leave school at the age of 16 and tend to work in the Government or the fishing sector. They have no opportunity to proceed to higher education unless they go abroad. The current staff members are, by their own admission, poorly trained. There are no trainee teachers in the pipeline. In September 2009, an education adviser sponsored by the Department for International Development began a two-year posting on the island, during which he delivered training. The post has been extended to 2015.

57. Tristan da Cunha is successfully implementing a number of conservation projects, with help from its partners, including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The Overseas Territory Environmental Programme projects include efforts to remove invasive species from uninhabited islands in the Tristan da Cunha group and studies on the feasibility of eradicating rodents. Tristan da Cunha also has a biodiversity action plan to help it to meet its commitments under the relevant Convention. This was updated in 2012 to cover a five-year period, until 2017.

58. According to the United Kingdom, in March 2011 a bulk carrier ran aground on Nightingale, spilling 1,600 tons of fuel and 65,000 tons of soya. Penguins on both Nightingale and Inaccessible — a World Heritage Site — were affected, and the fisheries on both islands were closed.

VII. Relations with international organizations and partners

59. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha are associated with, but not part of, the European Union. The Territory is a member of the South Atlantic Territories Cooperation Forum.

60. As stated in paragraph 32 above, in December 2012, the United Kingdom and its overseas territories represented at the Joint Ministerial Council meeting, including Saint Helena, agreed to work together to further develop links with the United Nations and its agencies and regional partners and expressed the belief that the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) should delist territories where that was their wish.

VIII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

61. Information on political and constitutional developments regarding the status of Saint Helena is reflected in section I above.

B. Position of the administering Power

62. On 11 October 2012, the representative of the United Kingdom made a statement before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. According to the record of the meeting (A/C.4/67/SR.5), the representative stated, inter alia, that the Government of the United Kingdom maintained its long-standing position on the independence of the overseas territories. Any decision to sever the constitutional link between the United Kingdom and a territory should be taken on the basis of the clear and constitutionally expressed wish of the people of that territory. Where independence was an option and it was the clear and constitutionally expressed wish of the people to pursue independence, the Government of the United Kingdom would meet its obligations to help the Territory to achieve it.

63. Furthermore, the representative referred to the white paper that the Government of the United Kingdom had published in June 2012 confirming the Government's commitment to maintaining the overall relationship between the United Kingdom and the territories. In the introduction, the Government expressed the belief that the fundamental structure of the constitutional relationships was the right one: powers were devolved to the elected Governments of the territories to the maximum extent possible consistent with the United Kingdom retaining the powers necessary to discharge its sovereign responsibilities, including to ensure that constitutional arrangements worked effectively to promote the best interests of the territories and of the United Kingdom. The Government recognized that it was important to continue to reflect on the constitutional relationship and would ensure that a dialogue on those issues was sustained with all those territories that wished to engage.

64. The representative went on to say that the white paper had made it clear that the fundamental responsibility and objective of the Government of the United Kingdom was to ensure the security and good governance of the territories and their peoples. That responsibility flowed from international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. However, being an overseas territory of the United Kingdom also entailed responsibilities: the Government of the United Kingdom expected territorial Governments to meet the same high standards that it did in maintaining the rule of law, respect for human rights and integrity in public life, delivering efficient public services and building strong and successful communities and would take firm and resolute action wherever there was evidence of corruption or maladministration in a territory. The representative concluded that the relationship between the United Kingdom and its overseas territories continued to be a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of each territory to determine whether it wished to stay linked to the United Kingdom. For as long as the overseas territories of the United Kingdom wished to retain their link to it, its Government would remain committed to their future development and continued security.

IX. Action by the General Assembly

65. On 18 December 2012, the General Assembly adopted without vote resolution 67/132 A and B on the basis of the report of the Special Committee (A/67/23) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. Section IX of resolution 67/132 B concerns Saint Helena. In the operative paragraphs of that section, the General Assembly:

1. *Stresses* the importance of the Territory's 2009 Constitution;

2. *Requests* the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard calls upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

3. *Requests* the administering Power and relevant international organizations to continue to support the efforts of the territorial Government to address the Territory's socioeconomic development challenges, including unemployment, and limited transport and communications infrastructure;

4. *Calls upon* the administering Power to take into account the unique geographical character of Saint Helena while resolving any emerging issues related to the construction of the airport.